



JOHN SCOTTUS SECONDARY SCHOOL

OLD CONNA, FERNDALE ROAD, RATHMICHAEL, CO. DUBLIN.

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22nd March, 2018

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

At the end of our eventful spring term, I would like to take this time to share a few notices with you.

Philosophy Themes

To provoke discussion and thought, some of the themes for the past few weeks have been:

Are you a radiator or drain pipe?

From Darkness to Light?

Catching upstream

For more information about the assembly themes please click [here](#).

Our philosophy week took place on March 5th with the theme "From Darkness to Light". During the week we explored the theme with assemblies and various workshops which we are still continuing with. We also had a guest speaker Enda Murphy who gave informative talks about the social, emotional, cognitive and physical changes that take place during the teenage years and how anxiety, bullying and drugs can adversely affect that development.

For your information Enda Murphy is one of the best known psychotherapists in Ireland and has authored many books including 'Flagging the Screenager, Guiding your child through adolescence and young adulthood' which was number 3 on the Irish Times best sellers list.

A group of our 5th years also went to Townley Hall as part of our Philosophy week to discover more about the meaning of "Darkness to Light". To read some student observations of the day please click [here](#).

Transport Services for next academic year 2018/2019

In planning for the transport arrangements for John Scottus Secondary School for the next academic year (2018-19) a major consideration for us has been our wish to continue to show appreciation for the great parental support and faith in our school that was evident during the move to our new location. In recognition of this the free transport arrangements that have been in place this year will continue in the next academic year. Specifically:

- City Centre (N11) and M50 routes will continue free of charge next year. They will bring students to school for the start of the school day and will depart at the end of the school day.

- Shuttle buses to and from DART (Shankill stop), LUAS (Brides Glen stop) and Shankill at start and end of school day will continue next year free of charge.
- There will also be a bus picking up students from the DART (Shankill stop) and LUAS (Brides Glen stop) who miss transport links before 9.00 am in order to ensure they are in time for their second class.

Please note that this provision of free transport cannot continue indefinitely and after the next academic year, which is from August 2019, there will be an introduction of bus charges. Detail on this will be forwarded to parents later in 2018.

Sechtain na Gailge

Seachtain na Gaeilge was held in the school during the week beginning 12th March and concluded with our céilí at Old Conna on Friday 23rd March. For more information please click [here](#).

Green Schools Week

This week our school community held a litter awareness week and participated in An Taisce's National Spring Clean week. To read more please click [here](#).

Business Update

To read about our TY Business students competing in the Model Europe Council Debate, please click [here](#). Our TY students, also came 6th in the country in the Generation Euro competition, to read more please click [here](#). Well done to our TY Business students.

Environmental Studies

Our TY students are busy working on the raised bed. To see some pictures of early spuds being planted, please click [here](#).

Sports Update

Well done to our Ultimate Frisbee teams who reached the finals on the Dublin Ultimate Frisbee Finals. To read more please click [here](#).

Well done also to our Senior Girls Hockey team who reached the quarter finals of the hockey. To find out more please click [here](#).

Junior Cycle Update

An information evening took place on the new Junior Cycle on Wednesday March 14th. An overview was given of the changes taking place and in particular how assessment is changing.

For 3rd years, the French Orals have taken place, the Irish Orals will take place the week of April 9th, and by the end of April the Science, CSPE and Art project work will have been completed.

As part of the new Junior Cycle, each student will receive, on completion of 3rd year, a Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement. This will document, in addition to the exam results,

other areas of learning and standards achieved in continuous assessment tasks and short courses. Our Transition Year students completed their reflections before their trip to India. These Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement Certificates have now been posted and you should receive them in the next few days.

Child Protection

The Children's First Act, 2015 and the recent Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children published in 2017 places new statutory obligations on all teachers and schools.

The new Child Safe Guarding Statement for the school can be found [here](#). In addition all teaching and non-teaching personnel have completed training in the new legislation.

New Teacher

I would like to introduce Mr. Mark Leavey who is now working time full-time in the school supporting students in various subjects across different years.

Strategic Plan

The school is currently formulating a plan for the future development of the school. Your input is much appreciated and if you would like to get involved in the process please complete the survey [here](#). In particular if you would like to be part of a small focus group please let me know.

Sports Facilities

We are looking forward to using the astro-pitch with its new surface after Easter. In addition the goals posts and basketball posts will arrive mid-April.

We look forward to using the new surface for a wide range of sports including hockey, soccer, basketball and tennis.

Maths Counts 2018 Conference

Two of our teachers, Mr. Philip Brady and Ms. Maria Creaney will be presenting at the upcoming Maths Counts Conference on May 11th and May 12th. They will be presenting their work on new teaching methodologies in Maths that support enquiry and critical thinking.

Food

A big hit at the moment is porridge with fruit for the early morning break at 10.30. Our food menu changes during the course of the year. To see the current menu please click [here](#). In addition for those students who have allergies or food intolerances please complete the Student Allergy Information Sheet [here](#) and return it to the school office.

Timetable next year

There will a small change to the timetable next year with the school day starting at 8.20 and finishing at 3.40pm, with an early finish of 12.45 on Wednesday. The changes will facilitate a dedicated period of time for assembly and class teacher time every day. It would also allow more time for sport on Wednesday afternoon. This change does in result in any loss of tuition time. Please note there will be no lunch provided on Wednesday.

School closed during storm Emma

To ensure that students are not adversely affected by the missed school days due to storm Emma, we will be making some changes in the next few months. Some examples of this are 6th years will finish school on Friday May 25th instead of May 18th, 3rd years will have classes up until June 1st and for other years tuition will take place up to the last day of school before class trips take place. We are confident that these changes along with others will ensure that tuition time lost will be recovered.

Learning and Teaching

We are continuing to place a huge emphasis on the way feedback to students is given and how students reflect on that feedback. After the recent exams each student received a cover sheet identify some strengths, areas of improvements and a space to reflect on what future actions need to take place. In addition we have introduced a policy where teachers correct in red and students need to comment on corrections in green. We hope this emphasis on feedback will develop in our students the habit of reflection and increase the rate of learning.

John Scottus Mindfulness Practice in Schools Conference

On April 28th, the 4th Mindfulness Practice in Schools Conference will take place in Old Conna. John Scottus School act as coordinators for the event as the practice of Mindfulness has been a key part of the ethos of the school since it started in 1986, as reflected in the school motto "Delight in the Present". For more information about the event please see <http://mindfulnesspracticeinschools.ie/>

Summary of Events coming up

Start of summer term – Monday April 9th

Active school week – starting Monday April 30th

Sports Day – Friday May 4th

Literacy Week – Monday May 7th

Speech Competition – Friday May 11th

Speech and Prize Giving - Thursday May 17th

Last day for 6th Year, Leavers' Service and Dinner – Friday May 25th

TY Play – Wednesday May 23rd to Saturday May 26th

Class Education Trips for Y1, Y2 and Y5 – Tuesday May 29th to Thursday May 31st

TY Graduation Night – Thursday May 31st

End of Summer Term – Friday June 1st

A philosophical thought for the day

"Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail"

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Have a happy Easter.

Yours warmly,



Dr. Declan Kelly

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